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For further information about this booklet contact Charles Hobbs, editor, News Division, Office of Public Affairs, Room 406-A, U.S Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-4026.

News Releases-

Release No. 1058.93

Kendra Pratt (301) 436-4898

Ron Hall (202) 720-3310

USDA REOPENS COMMENT PERIOD ON CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR MEXICAN CATTLE

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27--The U.S. Department of Agriculture is reopening the comment period on the proposed rule to require certification for interstate movement of cattle originating from Mexico. The public now has until Feb. 14 to submit comments on the proposal.

On Nov. 12, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service published in the Federal Register a proposal to require all Mexican cattle moved in interstate commerce to have officially certified documentation that identifies individual animals. The initial comment period on the proposal ended on Dec. 13.

Notice that the comment period is being reopened for 60 days was published in the Dec. 22 Federal Register.

To comment, send an original and three copies of written comments referring to docket number 93-084-1 on or before Feb. 14 to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments received may be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing access to the reading room are encouraged to call ahead on (202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry.



Release No. 1059.93

Kendra Pratt (301) 436-4898

Ron Hall (202) 720-3310

USDA ADDS PCFIA TEST FOR OFFICIAL PSEUDORABIES TESTING

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27--The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that it will add a sixth test to the list of official diagnostic tests for pseudorabies, a contagious disease of livestock.

"Using the Particle Concentration Fluorescence Immunoassay (PCFIA) will save money for the federal-state cooperative pseudorabies eradication program," said Billy G. Johnson, deputy administrator of veterinary services in USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

The PCFIA is an automated blood test that is also used to diagnose brucellosis, an infectious bacterial disease, in cattle and bison. APHIS scientists at the National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa, discovered the PCFIA test also can effectively diagnose pseudorabies in swine, Johnson said.

Five additional tests are officially approved for diagnosing pseudorabies in swine. State animal health authorities can use any official test. In some states, producers pay for a portion of testing expenses.

"We estimate that the nine states interested in using the PCFIA test would have saved about \$83,000 last year if the test had been available," Johnson said.

The final rule is scheduled for publication in the Dec. 28 Federal Register. The rule is effective Jan. 27, 1994.



REED NAMED AS USDA'S DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29 -- Anne F. Thomson Reed has been named as deputy assistant secretary of agriculture for administration, Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy announced today.

As deputy assistant secretary, Reed will help direct USDA's procurement, personnel, civil rights, information resources management, administrative law, and general operational activities.

"Anne Reed brings to this Department valuable experience in management, procurement, and budget on behalf of large organizations," Espy said. "I'm looking forward to tapping that experience as we continue our efforts to initiate constructive change at USDA."

Before joining USDA, since May 1992 Reed has served as head of the Weapons & Other Procurement Branch in the Office of Comptroller within the Department of the Navy, based at the Pentagon. In that capacity she oversaw the budget preparation of U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps weapons systems, totaling over \$10 billion. From 1987-92 she was the deputy director of the Navy's Budget and Management Policy & Procedures Office. She worked as a budget analyst for the Naval Sea Systems Command from 1983-86, after having served as a Presidential Management Intern with the Navy from 1981-83.

From 1977-80 Reed was the registrar and admissions officer for the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass., after having worked as a staff assistant to the assistant dean for administration at the Kennedy School from 1976-77. She served as a junior community planner for the Nashville City Planning Commission from 1974-76, following a position as a development researcher with the Office of Alumni Development at Vanderbilt University in Nashville from 1973-74.

Reed served as the Navy vice president of the American Society of Military Comptrollers, an organization of 17,000 members, and as the chair of the Alumni Executive Council of the Kennedy School of Government.

A native of Nashville, Reed holds a B.A. degree in international relations from Goucher College in Towson, Md., and a Master of Public Administration degree from the Kennedy School of Government.



Release No. 1062.93
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KEYS TO SURVIVAL FOR RANGE GRASS: HEAVY SEED AND DEEP SPROUTING

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29--Two crucial seed traits--its weight and its ability to send forth a shoot from deep in soil--are keys enabling U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists to develop hardier grasses for livestock on Western rangelands.

Crested wheatgrass and Russian wildrye varieties developed for these traits in recent years have up to a 25 percent greater survival rate than their wild, unimproved counterparts, said plant physiologist Douglas A. Johnson with USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Logan, Utah.

Hardier grasses could increase meat production, improve wildlife habitat and slow erosion on about half the world's grazing lands, according to Johnson and colleague Kay H. Asay at the ARS Forage and Range Research Laboratory.

But weather extremes, rough terrain and other factors make reseeding on rangelands much more complex than just strewing seed and praying for rain, according to the scientists.

"Two traits--weight of individual seeds and ability to emerge from a deep planting depth--most determine the success of cool-season grass reseeding programs," said Asay, a plant geneticist.

Over the years, they have examined more than a dozen seed and seedling traits important to grass survival and persistence. "Cool-season" refers to grass species that grow most in spring or fall. Warm-season grasses produce the most forage during hot summer months.

"Many desirable grasses, those that are palatable to livestock and wildlife and provide high nutrition, are difficult to get established," Johnson noted. "Some seeds may readily sprout, only to die

a few days later when dry weather and high temperatures arrive. Others may survive one or two years before disappearing. Still others seem adapted--for 10 years or more--but then die out or are crowded out by less desirable plants."

Relying on seed weight and emergence from a deep seeding depth during the past 15 years, scientists at Logan, Mandan, N.D., and in Canada developed and released 'Hycrest' crested wheatgrass and 'Bozoisky-Select,' 'Mankota' and 'Swift' Russian wildryes. The two seed traits probably can be used to improve other species of cool-season grass, Asay said.

An abundant mix of grasses, forbs and shrubs is desirable on range to supply forage year-round. Crested wheatgrass and Russian wildrye are among the best cool-season species for providing early-season nutrition for livestock and wildlife, the scientists said.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For more information, contact Douglas A. Johnson, plant physiologist, and Kay H. Asay, plant geneticist, Forage and Range Research Laboratory, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Logan, Utah 84322-6300. Telephone (801) 750-3067, fax (801) 750-3075.

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Release No. 1065.93

Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623

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USDA ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL DISASTER AID FOR PREVENTED PLANTING

WASHINGTON, Dec. 30--U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy today said producers in areas impacted by excessive rainfall and flood who were unable to plant a crop in excess of their planting history and could not replant another crop, may refile for prevented planting payments for the crop for which the farm has a planting history.

"This is another step in our continuing effort to assist those producers who were severely impacted by floods and excessive rainfall," said Espy.

Under the change, producers who filed for prevented planting payments for a planned crop larger than their historical planting were limited under disaster payment rules to claiming only the historical plantings of that crop. They may now refile for payment for acreage for which the producer has a crop history.

An example of such a situation would be a producer who had a crop history for planting 50 acres of soybeans and 50 acres of corn. His 1993 plans were to plant 100 acres of soybeans, but he was unable to because of flooding or excessive rainfall. The producer filed for the planned 100 acres of soybeans but due to crop history limitations in disaster payment rules, approval could only be given for 50 acres of soybeans. The producer may now refile for 50 acres of prevented planting corn.

County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committees must determine that such a crop would have been planted if it had not been for adverse weather conditions. However, the total of planted acreage plus prevented planting approvals may not exceed the smaller of the farm's planting history of the crops or the actual acreage the producer could not plant.

Producers should contact their county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service office for further information.

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Release No. 1068.93

Billy Cox (202) 720-3329

MEAT IMPORT ESTIMATE FOR FIRST QUARTER BASED ON VOLUNTARY RESTRAINTS

WASHINGTON, Dec. 30 -- Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today announced that the 1994 trigger level for meat imports specified in the Meat Import Act of 1979 has been set at 1,218.9 million pounds, 40.4 million pounds below the 1993 level. The Secretary also announced that the first quarterly estimate of meat imports under the Act for calendar year 1994 has been set at 1,218.8 million pounds.

The first quarterly estimate of imports was readjusted because of voluntary restraint agreements (VRAs) negotiated with Australia and New Zealand. These VRAs should keep total imports of beef below the trigger level for the calendar year.

Australia and New Zealand are the two largest suppliers of fresh beef to the U.S. market and historically supply almost 90 percent of total U.S. fresh beef imports.

The Meat Import Act of 1979 requires the Secretary to estimate imports of certain meat items--primarily beef and veal--each quarter of the year, and the President to impose quotas if the USDA's import estimate equals or exceeds the trigger level as determined by the formula in the Act.

Imports of meat subject to the law -- by month -- were:

Month	1990	1991	1992	1993
-----Million pounds-----				
January	90.7	66.0	97.6	171.0
February	97.1	85.9	99.3	119.5
March	115.4	114.4	90.6	102.0
April	118.0	97.1	129.7	170.1
May	76.9	101.5	172.6	105.7
June	100.8	145.2	102.2	84.4
July	121.3	121.9	166.9	126.2
August	122.2	144.6	113.8	90.7
September	137.7	113.8	107.8	120.2
October	99.9	173.3	137.7	97.1
November	131.8	82.5	74.2	64.7
December	141.0	84.4	28.6	

Total 1,352.8 1,330.6 1,321.1

*Totals may not add due to rounding.

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Program Announcements-

Release No. 1060.93

Gene Rosera (202) 720-6734

Charles Hobbs (202) 720-4026

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES, MARKETING CERTIFICATE RATES

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28--Under Secretary of Agriculture Eugene Moos today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

--long grain whole kernels:	11.77 cents per pound
--medium grain whole kernels:	11.05 cents per pound
--short grain whole kernels:	10.97 cents per pound
--broken kernels:	5.88 cents per pound

Based upon these milled rice world market prices, loan deficiency payment rates, gains from repaying price support loans at the world market price, and marketing certificate rates are zero.

These announced prices are effective today at 3 p.m. EST. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Jan. 4 at 3 p.m. EST.

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, Dec. 30--Bruce R. Weber, acting executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price or AWP), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (leaf grade 4, micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality), and the coarse count adjustment (CCA) in effect from 5:00 p.m. today through 3:59 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 6. The user marketing certificate payment rate announced today is in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Dec. 31 through midnight Thursday, Jan. 6.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price) exceeds the Northern Europe (NE) price. The maximum allowable adjustment is the difference between the USNE price and the NE price.

A further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 92 percent of the 1993 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the USNE price exceeds the NE price by 3.50 cents per pound. Following are the relevant calculations:

I.	Calculated AWP	48.28 cents per pound
	1993 Base Loan Rate	52.35 cents per pound
	AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate	92
II.	USNE Price	65.50 cents per pound
	NE Price	- 62.00 cents per pound
	Maximum Adjustment Allowed	3.50 cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant data, no further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP will be made.

This week's AWP and coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

NE Price	62.00
Adjustments:	
Avg. U.S. spot market location	11.91
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.50
Avg. U.S. location	0.31
Sum of Adjustments	- 13.72
Calculated AWP	48.28
Further AWP adjustment	- 0
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	48.28 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

NE Price	62.00
NE Coarse Count Price	- 59.17
	2.83
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton	- 3.20
	- 0.37
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	0 cents/lb.

Because the AWP is below 52.35 cents per pound, the base quality loan rate for both the 1992 and 1993 marketing years, the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the AWP, adjusted for the specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

Because the AWP is below the 1993-crop loan rate, cash loan deficiency payments (LDPs) will be paid to eligible producers who agree to forgo obtaining a price support loan with respect to the 1993 crop. The payment rate is equal to the difference between the loan rate and the AWP. Producers are allowed to obtain an LDP on a bale-by-bale basis.

The USNE price has exceeded the NE price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP has not exceeded 130 percent of the 1993 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period. As a result, the user marketing certificate payment rate is 2.25 cents per pound. This rate is applicable during the Friday through Thursday period for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to Sept. 30, 1994. Relevant data are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday through Thursday Period Ending	USNE Price	NE Price cents/lb	User Marketing Certificate Payment Rate
1	Dec. 9, 1993	61.65	57.91	2.49
2	Dec. 16, 1993	62.30	59.09	1.96
3	Dec. 23, 1993	63.50	60.62	1.63
4	Dec. 30, 1993	65.50	62.00	2.25

Next week's AWP, CCA and user marketing certificate payment rate will be announced on Thursday, Jan. 6, at 5 p.m.



Release No. 1066.93
Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206

USDA ISSUES 1993 GRADE LOAN RATES FOR CIGAR BINDER TYPES 54-55 TOBACCO

WASHINGTON, DEC. 30 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation today issued price support loan rates for the grades of 1993-crop cigar binder tobacco, types 54 and 55.

Since no cigar filler, types 42-44, tobacco is reported planted in Ohio, grade loan rates for this tobacco will not be issued.

The 1993 rates are based on the average support level of \$1.074 per pound announced March 1, 1993 for types 54-55 and 42-44. For 1992, the average support level was \$1.054 per pound.

The rates for cigar binder, types 54 and 55, range from 50 cents to \$1.45 per pound. Cigar binder 54 and 55 grades N2, "No-G" (no grade), or scrap will not be accepted for price support.

Cigar Binder (types 54 and 55) Grade and Loan Rates

Grade	Cents per Pound
X1	145
X2	125
X3	88
N1	50

There will not be a no-net-cost tobacco program assessment for 1993-crop cigar types 54-55 tobacco. The Wisconsin Cooperative Tobacco Growers Association will deduct 2 cents per pound and the Northern Wisconsin Cooperative Tobacco Pool, Inc., will deduct 1 cent per pound to cover administrative costs. Price support advances from these two entities are available only to the person who produces the tobacco pledged as collateral for a CCC price support loan.

Contact: Doug Clark (202) 720-5264



Release No. 1067.93
Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206

USDA ANNOUNCES 1994 FLUE-CURED TOBACCO NO-NET-COST ASSESSMENTS

WASHINGTON, DEC. 30 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation today announced that the combined flue-cured tobacco no-net-cost assessment and marketing assessment will be 3 cents for the producer and 5 cents for the purchaser on each pound of 1994-crop flue-cured tobacco that is marketed.

CCC's analysis indicates that when the potential losses on current inventory and anticipated 1994-crop loans are projected over the normal sell-out period of 5 years and after considering existing funds in the no-net-cost account from prior years, CCC needs to collect a total no-net-cost assessment of 6.417 cents on all the marketings of 1994-crop flue-cured tobacco. The approved no-net-cost assessment rates will be 2.2085 cents per pound for producers and 4.2085 cents per pound for purchasers.

The Agricultural Act of 1949 was amended in 1986 to require that the no-net-cost assessments be determined in such a manner that producers and purchasers share equally, to the maximum extent practicable, in maintaining the no-net-cost account for 1985 and subsequent crops of flue-cured tobacco. Accordingly, the purchaser assessment is more than the producer assessment because purchasers did not pay assessments with respect to the 1985 crop of tobacco.

In addition to the no-net-cost assessment, producers and purchasers must pay a tobacco marketing assessment. The marketing assessment for the 1994 crop was announced on December 15, 1993 (USDA Press Release No. 1031.93) and amounted to 0.7915 cent per pound for the producer and 0.7915 cent per pound for the purchaser.

The Flue-Cured Tobacco Cooperative Stabilization Corporation, the producer-owned association through which price support is made available for flue-cured tobacco, was consulted before the final determination on no-net-cost assessments was reached.



